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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Congressional office helps widow obtain military medals  
earned by husband during Korean War**

PHOENIX, Ariz. - The family of deceased Phoenix veteran Ernesto Martinez knew he had earned numerous medals for his honorable service in the Korean War, but he never received them before he passed away in 2002. His widow, Mrs. Ofelia Martinez, didn't want her husband's legacy to contain an incomplete chapter in his story. With the help of inquiries by U.S. Rep. Ed Pastor, D-Ariz., and his Phoenix staff, Mrs. Martinez and her family were presented with her husband's medals last week.

Mr. Martinez's family was presented with five medals honoring the Army veteran:

- The Army Occupation Medal with Japan Clasp
- The Korean Service Medal with two Bronze Service Stars
- The United Nations Service Medal
- The National Defense Service Medal, and
- The Combat Infantryman Badge

"Mr. Martinez served our country honorably and was a shining example of the men and women who fought for our freedom without expecting any laurels," Pastor said. "Mrs. Martinez was right to bring this matter to my staff's attention. Navigating the federal bureaucracy can be a daunting endeavor sometimes, and I'm happy the medals finally made it into her family's hands."

Mrs. Martinez first approached Congressman Pastor's office for help through the mobile office his staff holds each month at the South Mountain Community Center. Pastor said this case serves as a reminder of services constituents may receive from Congressional Offices. A member of Congress may inquire about missing military medals for veterans and their families, among other services. Congressional offices generally help constituents address problems they have with federal agencies.

Ernesto Martinez, who died at the age of 71, was a corporal in the Army and served from 1951 to 1954. After he was wounded in a leg and given an honorable discharge, he returned to civilian life. But he never received his medals. Mr. Martinez worked at Cudahy Co., until the 1970s. Later he worked as a custodian at Central and Camelback high schools until retirement. In addition to his wife, he is survived by their children Ernie and Eddie Martinez, Rebecca Romero and Rachel Sanchez, 16 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

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**PARA PUBLICACION INMEDIATA**

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Oficina de Ed Pastor le ayuda a una viuda obtener medallas ganadas por el veterano Ernesto Martinez

PHOENIX, Ariz. - La familia del veterano Ernesto Martinez sabía que él había ganado medallas numerosas para su servicio honorable en la Guerra Corea, pero él nunca las recibió antes de que el falleció en 2002. Su señora Ofelia Martinez no descansaba sabiendo que había un capítulo incompleto en la historia de su marido. Con la ayuda del Congresista Ed Pastor y su personal en Phoenix, la Sra. Martinez y su familia recibieron las medallas este mes.

La familia del Sr. Martinez fue presentada con cinco medallas que honran al veterano:

- La Medalla de la Ocupación del Ejército con El Corchete de Japón  
(Army Occupation Medal with Japan Clasp)
- La Medalla del Servicio Coreana con Dos Estrellas de Bronce Del Servicio  
(Korean Service Medal with two Bronze Service Stars)
- La Medalla de Servicio de Naciones Unidas  
(United Nations Service Medal)
- La Medalla de Servicio de la Defensa Nacional, y  
(National Defense Service Medal)
- La Divisa del Soldado de Infantería del Combate  
(Combat Infantryman Badge)

"El Sr. Martinez sirvió nuestro país honorablemente y era un ejemplo brillante de los hombres y mujeres que lucharon para nuestra libertad sin contar con ningunos laureles," dijo el Congresista Pastor. "Sra. Martinez tuvo razón en traer esta situación a la atención de mi oficina. A veces es difícil trabajar con la burocracia federal y estoy feliz que las medallas por fin llegaron a las manos de la familia Martinez."

La Sra. Martinez primero le pidió ayuda al personal del Congresista Pastor en el Centro Comunitario de Sur Phoenix, donde tienen oficina móvil. El Congresista Pastor dijo que este caso sirve para recordarle al público de los servicios que se ofrecen en las oficinas de los miembros del Congreso. Un miembro del Congreso puede investigar sobre la falta de las medallas militares para los veteranos y sus familias, entre otros servicios relacionadas con las materias federales.

Ernesto Martinez, quien murió a la edad de 71, era un cabo en el ejercito y sirvió de 1951 hasta 1954. Después que fue herido en una pierna y descargado honorablemente, volvió a la vida civil. Pero nunca recibió sus medallas. Sr. Martinez trabajó en Cudahy Co., hasta que cerraron la compañía. Despues trabajó en las escuelas secundarias Central y Camelback en Phoenix, hasta el retiro. Ademas de su esposa, sobreviven sus hijos Ernie y Eddie Martinez, Rebecca Romero y Raquel Sanchez; 16 nietos y 8 bisnietos.

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